

System Configuration Team (SCT)

Reasonable & Prudent Measure #26

Meeting Notes

July 28, 2000

Greetings and Introductions.

The July 28 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held at NMFS' Portland offices. The meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin of NMFS. The agenda and a list of attendees for the July 28 meeting are attached as Enclosures A and B.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced may be too lengthy to routinely include with the meeting notes; copies of all enclosures referred to in the minutes are available upon request from Kathy Ceballos of NMFS at 503/230-5420.

Hevlin noted that the main purpose of today's meeting was to talk about the FY'01 CRFM project list, particularly those projects that look like they're going to fall near the funding cutoff line. You'll then have the month of August to think about those items some more, and to review the new Biological Opinion, he said. Then, by September, we should have a pretty firm idea of the actual dollar amount of the FY'01 CRFM budget. At that point, he said, we may want to consider having an additional meeting in September to really work on finalizing the list.

Mike Mason noted that the Senate Conference Committee has recommended an FY'01 CRFM budget of \$81 million, while the House Committee is recommending \$80 million. In other words, he said, it's a pretty safe bet that we'll have about \$80 million to work with for next fiscal year. Jim Athearn said he has heard there is a possibility that Congress will consider a supplemental appropriation for the FY'01 CRFM budget, bringing the total to as much as \$200 million. However, it will likely be January or February before this decision is made, which could be problematic from a work scheduling standpoint.

I. FFDRWG and SRWG Updates.

Mike Mason distributed Enclosure C, the agenda from yesterday's Walla Walla District FFDRWG meeting. Hevlin said the turbine program, as discussed at yesterday's meeting, was essentially unchanged from what was presented to the SCT in June. The important thing to note is that the second McNary biological test is coming up; in preparation for that test, we need to do a modification of the construction contract, which is scheduled for October, Mason said. Currently, the McNary turbine study falls fairly low on the list of the SCT's FY'01 CRFM priorities; we need to sort that out so that we're not working on something we shouldn't be, said Mason. We'll red-flag that item as we look at the spreadsheet later in today's meeting, Hevlin said.

Hevlin and Mason touched briefly on some of the other items discussed by FFDRWG, including:

- **McNary Flow Deflectors** – FFDRWG discussed the feasibility of modifying the present flow deflectors at this project to incorporate the new curved radius deflector design to increase fish survival; FFDRWG agreed to separate out this redesign question from the issue of installing end-bay deflectors at McNary.
- **Lower Monumental Auxiliary Water Supply** – FFDRWG discussed the problems with the various auxiliary water supply design alternatives currently on the table; Hevlin noted that all of these alternatives are expensive – in the \$6 million to \$8 million range. The FY'01 cost for this line-item is likely to come down, but the cost in FY'02 and beyond could be fairly high. The bottom line is that we haven't really figured out this problem, Mason said; we're pretty much back to square one.
- **Extended Screen Update (Lower Granite, Little Goose, McNary)** – FFDRWG discussed the vibration problems associated with the current vertical barrier screen design; there is concern that some of the perforated plates could fall off. To fix this problem, it looks as though it may be necessary to re-drill or chamfer the existing perforations; there are questions about whether or not this could change FGE at these projects. Available data indicates that there is no significant difference in FGE between the modified perf plates and the existing perf plates, Hevlin said. FFDRWG's decision was to go ahead and install the modified perf plates; the contracts for that work need to start in August. The cost for this work is expected to be about \$1.5 million per project.
- **McNary Debris Management Program** – the Corps would like to model debris behavior under various operating scenarios at McNary, investigating the possibility of using project operations to keep small debris out of the gatewells, Hevlin said. At yesterday's meeting, there was also some discussion of purchasing a conveyor-belt-equipped debris removal vessel for use in McNary forebay.

Hevlin noted that the next FFDRWG meeting is scheduled for October 25-26; the next SRWG proposal review meeting has tentatively been set for the week of September 18 in Astoria.

II. Prioritization of the FY01 CRFM Project List.

The remainder of today's SCT meeting was devoted to an item-by-item discussion of the current FY'01 CRFM project list. The most recent spreadsheets, one showing the line-items by project, the other by current SCT rank, are attached as Enclosures D and E.

Kranda noted that he has added a new column to Enclosure E, titled "Variation," intended to capture the magnitude of the difference of opinion between the state, tribal and federal rankings of each project.

A variety of questions, comments, suggestions and re-rankings were offered at today's meeting. The group spent considerable time discussing the use of CRFM funds to repair the Lewiston levy; Hevlin said NMFS does not agree that CRFM dollars should be used for this project, while the Corps took the opposite view, arguing that the problems with the levy were caused by the 1991 experimental drawdown of Lower Granite. Ultimately, it was agreed to schedule a special SCT meeting in Lewiston to hear the Corps' presentation on why they feel it is appropriate to use CRFM funds to repair the levy, and to give the SCT an opportunity to tour the levy site.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Hevlin and John Kranda said they will incorporate all of these suggested changes into a new version of the spreadsheet, which will be distributed prior to the SCT's August 23 meeting. It was reiterated that the FY'01 CRFM budget is likely to be in the \$80 million range; Hevlin suggested that, between now and the next SCT meeting, the group think carefully about the projects that, as currently ranked, fall below that funding level, but which individual members felt strongly should be funded.

III. Next SCT Meeting Date and Agenda Items .

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for Wednesday, August 23 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at NMFS' Portland offices. Another meeting was set for Friday, September 8 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Meeting notes prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.